

P.J. Heilman House  
401 East Cleveland Avenue  
Guthrie  
Logan County  
Oklahoma

HABS No. OK-15

HABS,  
OKLA,  
42 GUTH,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. OK-15

## P. J. HEILMAN HOUSE

Location: 401 E. Cleveland Ave. (corner of Cleveland and Ash, S.W.)  
Guthrie, Logan County, Oklahoma.

Present Owner  
and Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Jack Harris.

Present Use: Residence.

Statement of  
Significance: This picturesquely massed house of 1895, built of local red sandstone and brick, was a point of pride in many of the early promotional publications of Guthrie, pointed out as a stately home and the first brick residence ever constructed in the town. It is one of two residential buildings which can be documented as the work of the important Guthrie architect Joseph Foucart and illustrates important aspects of his style. Built for a prominent territorial period businessman, the structure was the site of numerous gatherings of the local elite.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Dates of erection: The building was under construction in 1894 (August) according to the Sanborn Insurance Map which surveyed it at that time. The building was completed sometime in 1895, and the interior woodwork is embellished with Heilman's monogram over the date.
2. Architect: Joseph Foucart, Guthrie, O. T. Foucart used a rendering of the house in an advertisement for his business in the 1898 Guthrie Directory.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The following is a complete chain of title to lots 11 & 12, block 46, Guthrie Proper, the property on which the structure now stands. Reference is to the Office of the Clerk of the County of Logan, Oklahoma. Legal description of property, Block 46, East Guthrie, Lots 11 and 12:

1892 Trustee deed April 11, 1892, recorded April 22, 1892, lot 11 Book C page 8, Trustees for the Townsite of East Guthrie to Phillip J. Heilman

Trustee deed March 19, 1892, Book D page 459, Trustees for the Townsite of East Guthrie to Phillip J. Heilman

- 1914 Tax deed November 2, 1914, recorded August 25, 1917, lots 11 and 12 book 57 page 470, F. W. Wolfe, County Treasurer to F. W. Wolfe, Treasurer of Logan County (sale of land for delinquent taxes)
- 1917 Treasurer's deed October 10, 1917, recorded October 15, 1919, Book 62 page 148, Treasurer of Logan County to P. J. Heilman
- 1929 Warranty deed February 9, 1929, recorded February 12, 1931, Book 87 page 171, P. J. Heilman to Nellie Heilman

Warranty deed February 9, 1929, recorded February 12, 1931, Book 91 page 614, P. J. Heilman to Nellie Heilman

Decree in the matter of the estate of Nellie Heilman, deceased, August 14, 1947, recorded August 14, 1947, Book 217 page 300, Estate of Nellie Heilman, Norma H. Burford, Executrix to Norma H. Burford

Warranty Deed November 29, 1947, recorded December 9, 1947, Book 128 page 665, Norma H. Burford to Jack Harris and Bina Grace Harris (north 100')

4. Builder, suppliers: Unknown.
5. Original plans and construction: There are at this time no known specifications for the building. The only indication as to the original intent of the architect comes from his drawing of the house which he published to advertise his practice. This and the building as it now stands are similar enough in outline, massing, materials and general flavor to establish identity between them. They differ significantly in detail, however, most noticeably in the fenestration above the first story, the main porch, the deletion of doors giving access to the roof of the porch from the two north corners of the master bedroom and of a small balcony in the gable above that room. The top level of the tower, to be of brick was built of shingled frame construction and lacks the four circular windows in the cupola indicated in the drawing.

6. Alterations and additions: In September of 1898 the house stood without a porch; this was added prior to 1903, in frame, about the size indicated in Foucart's drawing, and was further enlarged before 1908 to its present size and configuration, and is now stuccoed (Sanborn Maps, 1894; 1898; 1903; 1908). During the occupancy of the Heilman family no further known alterations were made. There is physical evidence, however, that some steps leading from a door (still in place) in the south wall of the drawing room were removed, and that the fireplace was rebuilt in that room, the original supposedly corresponding to the small cast iron fireplace directly on the other side of the wall, in the dining room. The hearth was at some time converted from woodburning, fitted out with a gas fixture. The flue and ash disposal chute are still in place.

The Harris family made several changes after they assumed ownership of the structure. Most of these took place in 1948 and are as follows: the eastern wall of the "breakfast room" (southwesternmost room of the first story) was removed to enlarge the adjoining kitchen; the "pump room," just to the north of the former breakfast room, was converted to a lavatory, and the stairs leading from it to the back bedrooms of the second story were closed; the transom of the back door (in the south wall of the kitchen) was bricked shut and the two large windows to either side of the door were made smaller to their present size; two large windows on the east and west walls of the rear portion of the house were completely bricked shut, one each in the kitchen and pump rooms respectively; fireplaces were removed from the living room and the middle bedroom and the closet between the master (north) bedroom and the "writing room" to the west was removed so that the two rooms now communicate without a door; the trunkroom to the south of the master bedroom was converted to a bathroom and its tall window was shortened. The major renovation of the period occurred on the south end of the second story: the original arrangement in the low gable was two bedrooms to the east, and a bathroom to the west of the central hall which ran the length of the second story from the front stairs to the rear window in the center of the south gable; the back stairs came to the second floor north of the bathroom at the point where the hall ascends two steps to the major portion of the floor. All interior walls south of those steps were removed, save the wall and door of the stair, which was converted to a closet, and the entire area became a bedroom. The kitchen has been recently remodeled (the foregoing taken from an interview with Mrs. J. Harris, present owner, July 1973).

B. Historical Events and Persons Connected with the Structure:

1. P. J. Heilman. (Unless otherwise indicated, the source of information is Mrs. J. Harris.) Heilman was an early Guthrie businessman of whose life very few details are known. He was engaged in the harness business, operating out of a shop at 123 W. Oklahoma Ave. (city directory, 1896-7) and later found himself in the manufacture of canvas awnings, some of which once adorned his home. In building a residence he was moved not only by considerations of comfort and aesthetics, but by a lifelong fear of storms. He contracted with Joseph Foucart to design the most storm-and-tornado-proof house possible, and the result was the present Heilman House, of massive masonry construction, the first dwelling of other than frame construction in the town. Heilman's business failed in 1894, during the construction of the house ["The Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript," April 20, 1894; p. 1 col. 2] but he seems to have recovered eventually, because his house was finished within a year, and his business is listed in directories subsequent to that time.

C. Sources of Information:

1. Old views: Foucart's drawing in the City Directory advertisement of 1898 is the only known published view. It appears again in postcards and brochures of the period; most notable among these are "The Oklahoma State Capital Art Edition," published by the Daily State Capital in 1900, and Oklahoma Illustrated (p. 65), published by the Guthrie Daily Leader.
2. Bibliography:
  - a. Primary and unpublished sources:
    1. Deed Records, Office of the Clerk of Logan County Oklahoma.
    2. Tax records, Office of the Treasurer of Logan County, Oklahoma.
    3. Official Directories of the City of Guthrie
      - a. First Annual Directory, August 1889.
      - b. Business Directory, 1894.
      - c. City Directory, 1905.
      - d. City Directory, 1905.

4. "The Norman (Oklahoma) Transcript," April 20, 1894;  
p. 1, col. 2.
2. Secondary and published sources: None.
3. Likely sources not yet investigated:
  - a. Mrs. Burford, P. J. Heilman's only remaining child.  
Correspondence has been initiated with Mrs. Burford which  
should yield more information on the subject.
  - b. Records of Joseph Foucart, architect, not yet located.

Prepared by John Hnedak  
Project Historian  
Historic American Buildings  
Survey  
1973

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

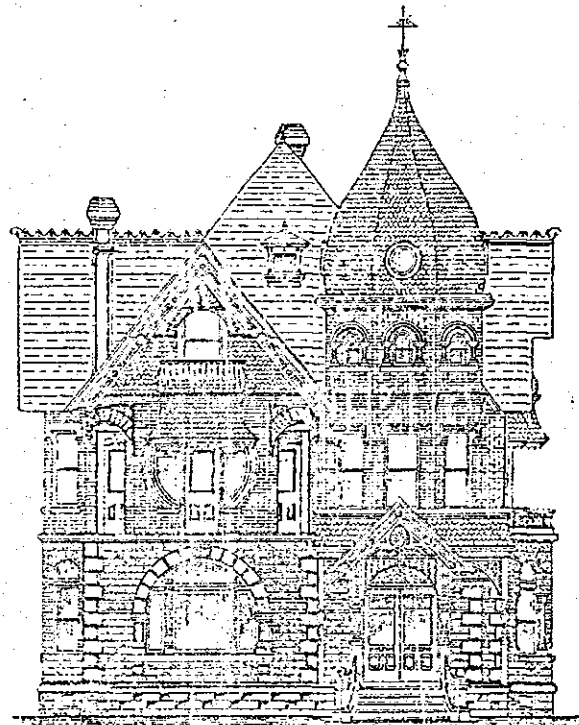
This two story brick and sandstone residence combines Queen Anne massing with Romanesque Revival details. Colonettes and arch surrounds enframe most of the windows and doors on the house. Secondary gables project from the primary hipped roof which has an east-west axis. A tower, covered by a shingled onion dome, sits above the stuccoed frame porch which shelters the main entrance. The keyhole and horseshoe windows are distinctive marks of the architect, Joseph Foucart. For additional information, see Town of Guthrie (OK-10).

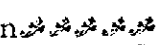
From the "OFFICIAL DIRECTORY of GUTHRIE and LOGAN  
COUNTY for the year commencing Jan. 1, 1898"

J. FOUCART EXPERT

Architect and Superintendent.

109 OKLAHOMA AVE., GUTHRIE, O. T.



Plans and Specifications Given 

 On the Most Difficult Work.

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey in cooperation with the Oklahoma Historical Society, which provided funds. Under the direction of John Poppeliers, Chief of HABS, the project was completed during the summer of 1973 at the Historic American Buildings Survey field office, Guthrie, Oklahoma, by Prof. John C. Haggard (Syracuse University), Project Supervisor; John D. Hnedak (Cornell University), Project Historian; William E. Barrett, Project Photographer; and student architects: Barry Gryb (Iowa State University) John Robbins (University of Virginia), Julian Smith (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), Howard Takenaka (University of Oregon).